



Gearing Up For Your Transitions

What is Transition Planning?

A very significant part of life for youths with disabilities and their family is Transition Planning. It usually begins at age 14, however; families are encouraged to think about the future of their child as they are growing. The focus is on improving academic and functional achievement while promoting the student's long-term goals and movement from school to post school activities by preparing them for adulthood. That may include vocational training, employment, college, adult services, independent living or getting involved in the local community.

The basis for Transition Planning is the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. It specifies how and when an Individual's Education Program (IEP) milestones take place.

Take a look at the law – IDEA [§300.320(b)] mentions:

Age 14- or as soon as appropriate, the IEP team can begin to address transition and post-secondary needs and goals.

Age 16 – Post secondary goals begin no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—

- (1) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
- (2) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

Measurable goals are set up by the IEP team for the student that is focused on the postsecondary world and specifies what transition services are needed to help the student reach those goals.

§300.43 Transition services.

(a) **Transition services** means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that—

- (1) Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

(2) Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes—

(i) Instruction;

(ii) Related services;

(iii) Community experiences;

(iv) The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and

(v) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

(b) Transition services for children with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a related service, if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

A student's interests, preferences, needs, and strengths must be considered during this process. Transition planning takes place as a part of developing the IEP.

Who is Involved in Transition Planning?

1. A parent or guardian
2. The student
3. General and special education teachers
4. Transition service coordinators
5. School administrators
6. School guidance counselors
7. Current service providers
8. Healthcare professionals
9. Adult service providers
10. Potential employers
11. Postsecondary school's Disability Services Office
12. Other members of your child's support network- coaches

How do I Find Transition Specialists in Delaware?

Delaware Department of Education - [Transition Staff Directory](#)

Who is responsible for Transition Planning?

Done by the student's IEP team, the school district is responsible for transition planning and some services. The IEP must include measurable goals by the time the student turns 16. Transition services are provided by individuals with knowledge, experience and training to meet the needs of the student in transition.

The Transition Coalition's booklet "It's More Than Just A Law, People Make It Happen" describes the roles of the transition team.

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) has a Transition Guide For Families on their website which discusses the challenges, meeting the challenges, developmental and core tasks.

The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) parent's guide "Developing Your Child's IEP" helps a parent learn what they need to know.